HISTORIA *Confeſſionis Auricularis ex antiquis Scripturæ, Patrum, Pontificum & Conciliorum Monumentis, cum cura & fide expreſſa.* Pariſiis 1683.

DE *Adoratione Euchariſtiæ Libri duo; quibus accedit Diſquiſitio Theologica de præcepto divino Communionis ſub utraque ſpecie.* Pariſiis 1685. in 8°.

TRAITE *du Corps & du Sang du Seigneur, par* Ratramne *ou* Bertram, *Pretre, Religieux de Corbie; en Latin & en François, avec des Remarques.* A *Paris*, 1686. in 12°.

'The ſame Year he publiſh'd, (ſays Monſieur *Du Pin*) *A Theological Diſquiſition of the Charity neceſſary to obtain Remiſſion of Sins in the Sacrament of Penance:* In *Latin.*

REMARQUES *d'un Theologien, ſur le Traite de* Maimbourg, *de l'Etabliſſement & des Prerogatives de l'Egliſe de Rome.* A *Cologne*, chez *P. Marteau*, 1688. in 12°.

'In 1691. (ſays Monſieur *Du Pin*) he caus'd 'to be Printed, a ſmall *French* Treatiſe, under 'the Name of a *Profeſſor in Divinity*, touch-'ing the Impediments of Marriage; wherein 'he maintains the Syſtem of Dr. *de Launoy*, 'againſt the Books of *Galeſius*, and of Mon-'ſieur *Gerbais.*

'In 1695. (continues Monſieur *Du Pin*) he 'cauſed to be reprinted the Diſſertation *ſuper Specula*, corrected and augmented; with a 'Diſſertation on the *Decretale ad Audientiam, de Clericis non Reſidentibus.* Another againſt

'ſome

1673. 75.

RECUEIL *de Pieces concernant les Cenſures de la Faculte de Theologie de Paris, ſur la Hierarchie de l'Egliſe; & ſur la Morale Chretienne, avec des Remarques ſur le* 18 *Tome des* Annales Eccleſiaſtiques, de *Odoricus Raynaldus.* A *Munſter*, chez *Bernard Raesfeld*, 1666. in 12°.

AD *Decretalem* ſuper ſpecula: de Magiſtris. *Opus Marcelli Ancyrani.* Pariſiis 1667. in 8°.

TRAITE *de Devoir & de la Vie des Eveques, par le Pere* Louis de Grenade, *Dominicain.* A *Paris*, chez *Leonard*, 1670. in 12°.

LE *Paſtoral de* St. Gregorie le Grand, *ou le Livre du Soin & du Devoir des Paſteurs, traduit nouvellement.* A *Paris*, chez *Pralard*, 1670. in 12°.

DE *Antiquo jure Presbyterorum in Regimine Eccleſiaſtico. Autore* Claudio Fonteio. *Taurini*, 1676. in 8°.

'The ſame Year, he publiſh'd, (ſays Monſieur *Du Pin*) a Treatiſe, to prove, That 'Contrition is neceſſary to obtain Remiſſion 'of Sins in the Sacrament of Penance.

DE *Antiquis & Majoribus Epiſcoporum cauſis Liber, ad Confutationem errorum Davidii in Libro* des Jugemens Canoniques des Eveques, avec une Diſſertation ſur le Concile plenier de St. *Auguſtin. Autore Theologo Pariſienſi. Leodii*, 1678. in 4°.

DISQUISITIO *Theologica de Sanguine Corporis Chriſti poſt Reſurrectionem, ad Epiſtolam* 146 Auguſtini. Pariſiis 1681. in 8°.

'ſome Remiſs Caſuiſts, and Ancient Scholaſtic 'Doctors, as *Martinus de Magiſtris*, Confeſſor 'to *Lewis* XI. who Excuſes, from Mortal Sin, 'immodeſt Contacts, which go no further 'than Pleaſuring the Senſes, without Will-'ing or Intending any further Corruption: 'A Dialogue between a Catholic Divine and a 'Proteſtant, upon ſome Paſſages of the *Greek* 'and *Latin* Fathers; wherein he pretends, 'That Men of Underſtanding have committed 'Faults, by endeavouring to Correct them; 'and therefore he Intitul'd it, *Colloquium Criti-'cum de Sphalmatis Virorum in re Litteraria Il-'luſtrium.*

HISTORIA *Flagellantium, ſive de recto ac perverſo Flagrorum uſu apud Chriſtianos: ex Antiquis Scripturæ, Patrum, Pontificum, Conciliorum & Scriptorum Prophanorum Monumentis cum cura & fide expreſſa.* Pariſiis, 1700. in 12°.

'HISTORICA *Diſquiſitio de re Veſtiaria Hominis Sacri Vitam communem more civili traducentis.* Amſtelodami, 1704.

'We may add, (ſays Monſieur *Du Pin*) to 'theſe Works of Monſieur *Boileau*'s; a *Latin* 'Edition of St. *Gregory*'s Paſtorale, from an old 'Manuſcript, with an Epiſtle Dedicatory to 'the Archbiſhop of *Sens*, and a Preface; an 'Edition of a ſmall Treatiſe of *Denis* the *Car-'thuſian*, concerning the Life of Canons, Printed 'at *Cologne* 1670. with an Epiſtle Dedicatory 'to the ſame Archbiſhop, and a Preface; ſome

'*Latin*

'*Latin* Objections to a Book, written by 'Monſieur *Gaudin*, againſt that of Monſieur '*Joly*, upon the Subject of what is mention'd 'in the Martyrology of *Uſuardus*, concerning 'the Aſſumption of the Virgin.

'Monſieur *Boileau*, (adds Monſieur *Du Pin*) 'is upon ſome other curious Pieces, which 'are near finiſh'd: There is no Queſtion but 'they will be wellcomly receiv'd, whenever he 'ſhall pleaſe to communicate them.

This Catalogue alone is ſufficient, *Sir*, to let you ſee, that Dr. *Boileau* is no leſs Laborious than Learned. Several of theſe Pieces appear'd without any Name; and you may obſerve, That he ſometimes diſguis'd his Name, as well as the Place where they were Printed. There was publiſh'd laſt Year, a ſmall Anonymous Piece in favour of *Plurality of Benefices*, which is likewiſe believ'd to be his. The Title of it is as follows:

DE *Re Beneficiaria Liber Singularis ſive Queſtionis celebris & difficilis, an & quibus in Caſibus liceat homini Chriſtiano abſque culpa & peccato plura Beneficia Eccleſiaſtica poſſidere* Auctore. *Cura & Studio Theologi Pariſienſis Abbatis Sedichembethenſis*, 1710. in 12.

M. NICOLAS BOILEAU, Sieur DESPREAUX, whoſe Life I undertake to write, was born at *Paris*, the 5th of *December*, 1637. His Father

Wiſe to a Man of Candor, Sweetneſs, Eaſe,
Him, by the ſelf-ſame Arts, I knew to pleaſe.
We never Rail'd, nor Snarl'd, by Day or Night;
The Yoke was Eaſie, and the Burden Light.
Whether my Children did that *Sweetneſs* ſhare,
Too curious Paſſenger, ſuch Queſtions ſpare;
Read but theſe Verſes---- and the *Pen* forbear.

Monſieur *Deſpreaux* began his Studies in the College of *Beauvais*; and when he was in the third Form, Monſieur *Sevin*, a Man of Merit, who taught that Form for near Fifty Years, firſt perceiv'd in his Scholar the Talent he had for Verſe; and took a Pleaſure in telling People, *He wou'd be a great Man that Way*; being perſuaded, That he who is born a Poet muſt abſolutely be ſo. The continual reading of the Poets and of Romances diſcover'd Monſieur *Deſpreaux*'s Taſte for Poetry: But this ſort of Reading, which he himſelf call'd a *Maadneſs*, far from ſpoiling his Head by a confus'd heap of Ideas, ſerv'd only to inſpire him with a more exact Judgment and more lively Touches againſt the blind Sides of Authors. And this ſhows, *Sir*, That a Man who has natu-

naturally a ſound Judgment, makes Advantage of every Thing, and riſes to Perfection by the ſame Methods which generally Spoil your ſmall Genius's. But the Authors which he read with moſt Reliſh and Delight, were thoſe wherein he met with a fine and judicious Satire; as he himſelf informs us in theſe Verſes *, where, after having ſpoken of the Uſefulneſs of Satire, he adds,

'Twas ſacred *Satire* firſt inſpir'd my Song,
And taught me to diſtinguiſh Right from Wrong;
She, from a Boy, inſtructed me to Hate
A fooliſh Book, and fear it's Author's Fate.
She help'd Me to aſcend *Parnaſſus* Hill;
She firſt encourag'd, and confirms me ſtill:
For *Satire*, in a word, I vow'd to write,
And made a Duty of my firſt Delight.

† Monſieur *Deſpreaux* was not long before he ſatisfy'd the Paſſion he had for Poetry. He was hardly Eighteen Years of Age, when he compos'd an *Ode, upon a Report at that time, That the* Engliſh *were going to make War againſt* France. This ſmall Piece does not want for Fire nor Elevation, the Diction of it is

* Sat. IX.
† 1656.

ther reflecting ſometimes upon the different Temper of his Children; ſurpriz'd at the Sweetneſs and Simplicity of Manners which he fancied he ſaw in our Author, us'd commonly to ſay of him in Oppoſition to the others, That *he was a good Boy and wou'd never ſpeak Ill of any Body.* But the good Man drew more then his own Character than his Son's, whoſe Genius was not then Unfolded. He believ'd he wou'd Inherit that Sweetneſs of Temper and that Simplicity which was ſo Natural to himſelf, and which his Son (*Deſpreaux*) has deſcrib'd in the following Verſes, deſign'd to be put under his Father's Picture.

Ce Greffier doux, & pacifique
De ſes Enfans au Sang critique
N'eut point le Talent redoute:
Mais fameux par ſa probite,
Reſte de l'Or du Siecle antique,
Sa Conduite dans le Palais
Par tout pour exemple citee,
Mieux que leur plume ſi vantee,
Fit la Satire des Rollets.

The

This peaceful Man, who does the Canvas ſtain,
Ne'er had his Critic Children's dreaded Vein.
In him——
For Sweetneſs fam'd, and Probity renown'd,
A Remnant of the Golden Age was found.
His Conduct in the Law, ſo oft confeſt,
And by the Bench for Imitation preſt,
Did make againſt the * *Rollet*'s of the Age,
A ſharper Satire than their Scribling Rage.

The Author's Mother was no leſs Good-natur'd than his Father, as Monſieur *Deſpreaux* informs us in the following Epitaph, where that Lady is introduc'd, ſpeaking of her ſelf, thus:

Epouſe d'un Mari doux, ſimple, officieux,
Par la meme douceur, je ſus plaire a ſes yeux:
Nous ne ſumes, jamais ni railler, ni medire.
Paſſant, ne t'enquiers point ſi de cette bonte
Tous mes Enfans ont herite;
Lis ſeulement ces vers, & garde toi d'ecrire.

Wife

* Rollet, *a Lawyer, is frequently Satiriz'd by M.* Boileau, *upon Account of his unjuſt Practices.*

A Nobler Buſineſs my Ambition fir'd;
Gold I neglected, and to Fame aſpir'd.
My Father, Brother, Uncle, Regiſters,
My Couſin, Brother-in-Law, with equal Cares,
Held the ſame Poſt, and *I the ſame with theirs.*
Soon weary of the muſty Rolls, I fled
The Courts, and turn'd to brighter Things my Head.
I ſought the Nymphs that haunt th' *Aonian* Floods,
And early ſtray'd in the *Pierian* Woods.
The Family beheld, with Rage and Scorn,
A Poet, in the duſty Office born.
To *them*, the lawleſs Muſe, with Horror ſnor'd
On Scrolls, o'er which with ſo much Gain *they* por'd.

Monſieur *Deſpreaux* ſays pretty near the ſame Thing, in his Epiſtle *to his Book*.*,

Of you, my Verſe, if any ſhould inquire,
Or what my Fortune was, or who my Sire,
Or how I led my Life; to theſe declare,
My Father was a worthy *Regiſter*.
And higher ſtill I my Deſcent might draw,
From thoſe who Plead, and thoſe who deal the Law.

* *Epiſt.* X.

From Magiſtrates and Advocates I came,
Nor will you be Diſhonour'd by my Name.
I, in the Cradle, a dear Mother loſt,
Nor long cou'd of a tender Father boaſt.
His Loſs in Four *Biſſextile* Years I mourn'd,
And Looſe I, to the World, too Young was turn'd.
By the ſole Conduct of my Genius led,
Perſius and *Horace*, I with Paſſion read.
Fond of their Talent, I their Manner choſe,
And near to *Regnier* on *Parnaſſus* roſe.

There was at that time in *France* a great Number of Poets, who, tho' very indifferent Ones, yet made a great Noiſe; and even ſome among 'em were look'd upon as Models. Monſieur *Deſpreaux* cou'd not endure to ſee a wrong Taſte prevail, and the Town ſuffer it ſelf to be Bubbl'd by Authors without Genius, and who ſeem'd to write in Oppoſition to good Senſe and Reaſon. He thought it his Duty to revenge *Both*, and thereupon writ ſome *Satires* which gain'd him a great Reputation, and at the ſame time drew upon him the Hatred and Reſentment of a Legion of Paltry Poets. The Love he had for *Virtue* engag'd him likewiſe not to ſpare *Vice* in his *Satires*, and put him upon Cenſuring

with

with great Sharpneſs the corrupt Manners of his Age. He thereby created himſelf new Enemies, tho' leſs Terrible than the former; but all this did not hinder the Public, who were charm'd with the Beauty of his *Satires*, from declaring themſelves in his Behalf. People were never tir'd with engaging him to recite his Verſes; and by frequently repeating the fineſt Paſſages, they became as it were Proverbs. Monſieur *Deſpreaux* himſelf has inform'd us of the happy Succeſs his firſt Works met with. It is in his Epiſtle *to his Book*, where he thus Addreſſes himſelf to his laſt Productions * :

You think the Public will be proud to read,
And like your Elder Brothers, to ſucceed;
Tho' the weak Offſpring of my Age, you hope,
As well as they, to ſhine in *Barbin*'s Shop:
That from the People, you'll to Princes paſs,
And equal Glory gain, and equal Grace.
That Court and Country will alike be pleas'd,
And Proverbs ſoon be made of ev'ry Jeſt.
So Home you'll ſtrike, the Charm will be ſo ſtrong,
That nothing ſhall reſiſt your pow'rful Song:

* *Epiſt.* X.

But don't deceive your Selves, nor think to find
The Court and Country to your Rhymes, ſo kind:
My Spring of Wit is paſt; my Youthful Vein
And you, my Muſe, ſhall never Bloom again:
Nor ever muſt my *Verſe* again pretend,
The Faults of Others to Reprove, or Mend.
My Muſe, when Young, the French *Parnaſſus* ſway'd,
And with gay Robes her pompous Verſe array'd.
A lawful Rage did then her Wit provoke,
And juſt Reſentment pointed ev'ry Stroke.
When before Reaſon ſhe indicted Rhyme,
When ſhe no Folly ſpar'd, and ſpar'd no Crime.
When on Mankind, and on her Self, ſhe fell,
And thoſe who felt the Laſh, approv'd her Zeal:
The Reader pleas'd with my Impartial Rage,
Forgot his Wrath, and rob'd the hated Page.
When the Jeſt tickled him, he ſtole the Line,
And often Larded his Diſcourſe with Mine.

By this, *Sir*, you ſee, with what Applauſe the firſt *Satires* of Monſieur *Deſpreaux* were receiv'd. Thoſe of *Regnier* had met with a general Approbation; and indeed, there are ſome

ſome written by that Poet, which even in Monſieur *Deſpreaux* Judgment, are Admirable: But it muſt be own'd, they are very ſhort of the Perfection of our Author's; as well in Point of Sweetneſs and Harmony, as Purity of Style, and that Character of Chaſtity with which Monſieur *Deſpreaux* firſt found out the Way of enriching the *French* Satire. Theſe Advantages gave ſo great a Reliſh for the *Satires* of Monſieur *Deſpreaux*, that every Body ſtrove to have Manuſcript Copies of 'em, which at length, as it never happens otherwiſe on ſuch Occaſions, were Printed, as they were handed about full of Faults, and with ſome other Pieces, father'd upon Monſieur *Deſpreaux*, tho' they were very far from his Genius and Turn of Wit. Monſieur *Deſpreaux* could not bear to ſee his Works thus treated; ſo having obtain'd a Privilege from the King *, he publiſh'd them himſelf, as he had originally compos'd them. This firſt Edition came out in 1666. Perhaps, *Sir*, you may not be unwilling to ſee the Preface which Monſieur *Deſpreaux* prefix'd, under his Bookſeller's Name. It is no diſagreeable Thing to the generality of People to know in what Manner, an Author that is grown Famous, firſt produc'd himſelf into the World. Beſides, this Preface being no where to be found but

* It is dated May 6. 1666.

in the firſt Editions of Monſieur *Deſpreaux*'s Works, which are extreamly ſcarce, 'tis to be fear'd it might in time be loſt, unleſs Care be taken to preſerve it. It is as follows, entirely.

'The *Satires* now made Public, (ſays the Bookſeller) had never run the hazard of being Printed, if the Author could have been Maſter of his own Writings. Whatever Applauſe his Works may have receiv'd from ſufficient Numbers of People fond of ſuch Pieces, his Modeſty perſuaded him that to Print them, wou'd be increaſing the Number of bad Books, which he ſo often Condemns, and thereby rendred himſelf deſerving of a Place in his own *Satires*. This Conſideration has for a long time caus'd him to endure, with a Patience ſomewhat Heroic in an Author, the mangled Copies which have been handed about of his Works, without being tempted to commit them to the Preſs. But at length, all his Conſtancy forſook him, when he ſaw that monſtrous Edition which lately appear'd. The Tenderneſs of a Father awoke at the Sight of his Children ſo Disfigured and torn to Pieces: Eſpecially, when he found 'em accompanied with ſuch flat inſipid Proſe, that all the Salt of his Verſes cou'dn't give 'em the leaſt Reliſh. I mean that JUDGMENT UPON SCIENCES, which was ſo injudiciouſly tack'd to the end of his Book.

'He

'He was afraid his *Satires* wou'd be 'utter-'ly ſpoil'd in ſuch ſcurvy Company; and at 'length grew ſenſible, that ſince a Work is 'ſooner or later to paſs thro' the Hands of a 'Printer, it were better to undergo one's Fate 'with a good Grace, and do that one's Self 'which was before done in ſpite of our Teeth. 'Eſpecially, ſeeing the worthy Gentleman, who 'had the Care of the firſt Edition, has inſerted 'therein the Names of ſome Perſons whom the 'Author honours, and before whom he is very 'willing to juſtifie himſelf. All theſe Conſi-'derations have, I ſay, oblig'd him to truſt me 'with the true Originals of his Pieces, and 'Two Additional Ones beſides, for which he 'was apprehenſive of the ſame Fate *. But 'withall, he charg'd me to Excuſe him to 'ſuch Authors as may be offended at the 'liberty he has taken in mentioning their 'Works up and down in his Writings. He 'deſires 'em therefore to conſider, That *Par-'naſſus* was ever a Free-Country: That the 'moſt ingenious are there every Day expos'd 'to the Cenſure of the moſt Ignorant: That 'one ſingle Man's Opinion is no Law; and 'that, at the worſt, if they are perſuaded he 'has done their Works any Damage, they may 'Revenge themſelves upon His, which he gives 'up entirely to 'em, not excepting even the 'very Points and Comma's.

* *This Edition contain'd, The Diſcourſe to the King, and Eight Satires.*

'Now, if they are not ſatisfy'd with this, 'he Adviſes 'em to have Recourſe to the 'happy Tranquillity of ſome great Men, ſuch 'as thoſe, who never fail to Comfort themſelves for the like Misfortune with ſome famous Example taken from the moſt celebrated Authors of Antiquity, which they apply ſolely to themſelves. In a word, he begs 'em to conſider, That if their Works are 'Bad they deſerve to be Cenſur'd, and if they 'are Good, all that can be ſaid againſt 'em 'will never make 'em Bad. To conclude, 'Since the Malice of his Enemies has lately 'endeavour'd to give a guilty Senſe even to 'his moſt innocent Thoughts, he deſires honeſt 'Gentlemen not to ſuffer themſelves to be ſurpris'd with the refin'd Subtilties of thoſe 'ſmall Wits, who know not how to revenge 'themſelves but by Cowardly Methods, and 'wou'd often make a frightful Crime of a 'Poetical Elegance.

'I am likewiſe order'd to Adviſe thoſe, 'who ſhall be inclin'd to Satirize, [illegible] Sa-'tires, not to do it in Hugger-Mugger. 'I'll undertake, the Author ſhall not Indict 'em before any other Tribunal than that 'of the Muſes: Becauſe, if they are groſs 'Abuſes, the Paſtry-Cook will do him Ju-'ſtice upon 'em; But if they are keen Rail-'leries, he is not ſo ignorant in the Law, as

'not

'not to know that One ought to bear the Pu-
'niſhment of Retaliation. Let 'em therefore
'Write and Welcome; as they will undoubted-
'ly contribute to render the Author more Illu-
'ſtrious, they will inhance the Bookſeller's
'Profit; and that's all I care for. But what-
'ever Intereſt I have therein, I adviſe them
'to wait a little, and give their ill Humour
'time to ripen. Nothing is done well that is
'done in Anger. You may, diſcharge your
'Gall as much as you pleaſe, in odious foul-
'mouth'd Language. It only ſhows the mean-
'neſs of your Spirit, without leſſening the Re-
'putation of the Perſon you attack: A Reader,
'who is perfectly indifferent, does not eſpouſe
'the idle Paſſions of a hot-headed Rhymer.
'Much might likewiſe be ſaid, touching the
'Reproach that is thrown upon the Author,
'for having taken his Thoughts out of *Juvenal*
'and *Horace*. But, all Things well conſider'd,
'he thinks the Objection ſo Honourable, that he
'fancies he ſhou'd injure himſelf by making any
'Reply.

This Work rais'd great Commotions upon the French *Parnaſſus*. The Authors, therein attack'd, were at their Wits-end, to ſee themſelves ſo Ridicul'd, after the Enjoyment of an advantagious Reputation; and the Writers of a ſuperior Claſs, of whom Monſieur *Deſpreaux* had nothing to ſay, were, notwithſtanding, in dread of his Pen; tho' in all

Pro-

Probability their Secret Thoughts were the ſame with His, yet they did not approve of his Manner of Writing, and blam'd him particularly for the liberty he gave himſelf in naming of Perſons. This oblig'd him to write a new *Satire* *, to defend himſelf againſt the Complaints of theſe Gentlemen.

He likewiſe writ a *Diſcourſe upon Satire*, wherein he juſtify'd his Conduct from the Example of Satirical Poets, both *Latin* and *French*. 'When firſt I publiſh'd my Satires, 'ſays he, I expected the Tumult which the 'Printing of my Book has excited on *Parnaſſus*. 'I know that the Nation of Poets, and eſpe-'cially bad Ones, is a very untractable Nation, 'very apt to take Fire; and that theſe Wits, 'greedy of Praiſes, wou'd not eaſily digeſt a 'Raillery, be it ever ſo mild. Thus I will 'therefore venture to ſay for my Self, That I 'have look'd upon, with a Temper not a little 'Stoical, the defamatory Libels that have 'been publiſh'd againſt me. Whatever Ca-'lumnies they have endeavour'd to blacken me 'with, whatever falſe Reports they have ſpread 'concerning my Perſon; I readily pardon'd 'theſe little Revenges, to the Vexation of an 'exaſperated Author, who ſaw himſelf at-'tack'd in a Poet's moſt ſenſible Part, I mean, 'his Wit. But, *adds he*, I own I was a little 'ſurpriz'd at the unaccountable Concern of 'certain Authors, who inſtead of diverting

'thein-

* 'Tis the IXth.

'themſelves with a Poetical Quarrel of which 'they might have been the indifferent Spectators, have choſen to take Part therein, and 'to be uneaſie with Fools rather than be merry 'with Men of Senſe. It is for their Conſolation 'that I wrote the preceeding *Satire*, wherein I 'think, I have pretty clearly ſhown, that without giving Offence, either to the Government, or one's Conſcience, a Man may call 'execrable Verſes, execrable, and own himſelf tir'd with reading a ſilly Book. But, 'continues he, ſince theſe Gentlemen have 'mention'd the Liberty I have taken in 'naming of Names, as an unpreſidented and 'unheard of Attempt, I have thought it Proper in this Place to add a Word or two for 'their Information in a Thing which *they only* 'wou'd be Ignorant of, and to let them ſee, 'that in Compariſon with the reſt of my Satirical Brethren, I have kept very much within 'Bounds.

This he afterwards proves from the Example of *Lucilius*, *Horace*, *Perſius*, *Regnier*, and ſeveral other Poets Ancient and Modern.

* Some Time afterwards, Monſieur *Deſpreaux* addreſs'd *to the King* an *Epiſtle* †, wherein he Praiſes his Majeſty upon the Peace he had lately

* *In* 1669. † *Epiſt.* I.

lately concluded with *Spain*, and the Care he took to procure the Eaſe, the Plenty, and the Repoſe of his Subjects. This Piece was Printed by it ſelf, and in that Manner more than one Edition was given of it. Monſieur *Deſpreaux* added it afterwards to his other Works, and put before it a little Advertiſement, which contain'd ſome remarkable Particulars. The firſt, related to an Alteration he had made in that Piece, according to the Advice which the famous Prince of *Condé* was pleas'd to give him. 'I perſuaded 'my ſelf, *ſays he*, That the Fable of the *Oyſter*, 'which I had put at the End of the Epiſtle 'to the King, would prove an agreeable Re-'laxation to the Reader's Mind, which might 'have been fatigued by too ſerious a Strain of 'the Sublime; Beſides, the Correction I had 'made thereof ſeem'd ſufficient to have ſecur'd 'me from a Fault which I demonſtrated my 'ſelf to be the firſt Diſcoverer of. But I con-'feſs, there are Perſons of good Senſe who have 'not approv'd of it. I did, however, heſitate 'a long while, whether I ſhou'd leave it out, 'becauſe there were many who blam'd it as 'immoderately as others condemn'd it. But at 'length, I ſurrender'd my ſelf to the Autho-'rity of a Prince, no leſs conſiderable for the 'Brightneſs of his Parts, than for the Number 'of his Victories: He having ſincerely aſſur'd 'me, that this Fable, tho' very well told, did 'not ſeem to him worthy the other Part of

'the

'the Work; I readily complied, and put a diffe-
'rent Concluſion to that Epiſtle; nor did I think
'it became me, for the ſake of a Score of Verſes,
'to fall out with the firſt Captain of our Age‖.
Monſieur *Deſpreaux* after this, diſowns ſome Pieces that were handed about under his Name.
'For the reſt, *ſays he*, I deſire the Reader to
'take Notice, that there are a great many im-
'pertinent Pieces induſtriouſly ſpread abroad
'under my Name, and among others, a Satire
'againſt *Eccleſiaſtical Exactions* †. I am under no
'Apprehenſion, that Men of Senſe will think
'me the Author of theſe Pieces, becauſe
'my Style, good or bad, is eaſie to be known.
'But as the Number of *Ignoramus*'s is very
'great, and they may eaſily be deceiv'd, I de-
'per'ro let them know, that beſides the
'Eleven Pieces in this Book ‡, there is nothing
'of mine abroad, either Printed or in Manu-
'ſcript.

Some time before this, Monſieur *Deſpreaux* had compos'd a ſmall Work in Proſe, Intituled, *A Dialogue of the Dead*, wherein he made it his Buſineſs to expoſe the Folly of ſome Dramatic Pieces, and Romances, which, at that time were in mighty Vogue.

The

‖ *Monſieur* Boileau, *ſome time after, inſerted his Fable, at the end of his 2d Epiſtle, inſcrib'd to Monſieur* l'Abbe des Roches.

† *It begins*, Quel eſt donc ce Caprice, *&c.*

‡ *Theſe Eleven Pieces, (in Verſe) were, the* Diſcourſe to the King, Nine Satires, *and the* Epiſtle to the King.

The Poem call'd *la Pucelle*, (or, the Maid of *Orleans*) written by Monſieur *Chapelain*, was not ſpar'd in it; but the ſtreſs of the *Critique* turn'd upon the Romances, *Grand Cyrus*, and *Clelia*, written by Mademoiſelle *de Scudery*. 'Tis, undoubtedly, of this ſmall Piece that Monſieur *Arnauld* ſpeaks, in a Letter which I ſhall have Occaſion to entertain you with more particularly hereafter. 'The Princeſs of *Conty*, and the Dutcheſs of '*Longueville*, *ſays he*, being inform'd that 'Monſieur *Deſpreaux* had writ ſomething in 'Proſe againſt Romances, wherein *Clelia* had 'not eſcap'd Cenſure; and thoſe Princeſſes 'knowing better than any Body how dangerous 'ſuch Books are; ſent to let him know they 'ſhou'd be very glad to ſee it. He repeated it 'to them; and they were ſo well pleas'd with 'it, that they cou'd not forbear expreſſing their 'Wiſhes for having it Printed: But he excus'd 'himſelf, leſt it ſhould create him new Ene-'mies.

Mademoiſelle de Scudery, a Lady of great Merit, being, as I have before obſerv'd, the moſt Criticiz'd in this Piece, Monſieur *Deſpreaux* conſtantly refus'd to publiſh it during her Life. I am very well aſſur'd he never committed it to Writing. But yet, being always ready to oblige his Friends with repeating

ing it, ſome of them writ down what they had retain'd in their Memory; and ſo it came to be Printed, the firſt time in 1688. in a Collection of Flying Pieces. It was afterwards Printed in *Holland*, and inſerted among the Works which bear the Name of Monſieur *de St. Evremond*; and as Doctor *Silveſtre* and my ſelf had, in the Edition we gave of that Author's Works, left out every Thing that was not Genuine; yet, to prevent this *Dialogue* from being loſt, I inſerted it in the *Melange curieux des meilleures Pieces attribuees a Monſieur de St. Evremond.* 'Tis probable that, as we have it, it is but an imperfect Reſemblance of the Original. However, there are very beautiful Strokes in it, and I make no doubt but the Public will be glad to find it in this Tranſlation among the Works of Monſieur *Deſpreaux.*

The Rapidity of *Louis* the XIVth's Conqueſts in *Holland*, in the Year 1672. gave Monſieur *Deſpreaux* Occaſion to Addreſs a New Epiſtle to the Prince; wherein he gives the Hiſtory of that Campaign, with all the Sublimity that Poetry can furniſh. The Deſcription of the Paſſage of the *Rhine* is ſo Pompous, that it has impos'd upon ſeveral *French* Hiſtorians, who affirm, That, *that Paſſage was look'd upon as one of the boldeſt Enterprizes that*

that were ever form'd and executed *; and that *it is impoſſible to conceive the Noiſe which ſo bold and ſo well conducted an Action made in the World* †. But we have a far different Account of this Matter from the Count *de Buſſi Rabutin*; who lies under no Suſpicion, for being at that time baniſh'd the Court, he forgot nothing to reingratiate himſelf, and let not the leaſt Opportunity ſlip of exalting the Glory of his Prince; and who beſides, was very capable of forming a right Judgment in that caſe, being arriv'd to the *Poſt* of Lieutenant General of the King's Armies, and *Meſtre de Camp General* of the *French* and *Foreign* Horſe. 'The Paſſage of the *Rhine* by 'Swimming, (*ſays he, in a Letter to the Marchioneſs de Sevigny,*) is a Glorious Action, 'but not ſo deſperate as you imagine. Two 'Thouſand Horſe paſs over to attack Four or 'Five Hundred. The Two Thouſand are 'ſupported by a great Army where the King 'is in Perſon, and the Four or Five Hundred are 'Troops intimidated by the rough and vigorous 'Manner in which the Campaign was begun. 'Tho' the *Hollanders* had had a greater Reſolu'tion upon this Occaſion, they wou'd not have 'kill'd many more Men, and at length they 'muſt have been overpower'd with Numbers. 'If the Prince of *Orange* had been on the 'other

* Rencourt's *Hiſt. of* Louis XIV. *Vol. I. p.* 386.

† *Hiſtory of* Louis XIV. *to the General Peace in* 1697. *Book IV. p.* 103.

'other ſide the *Rhine* with his Army, I do 'not think they wou'd have ventur'd to Swim 'it, before him: That had indeed been a deſpe-'rate attempt; and yet it is what *Alexander* 'did at the Paſſage of the *Granicus*; he Swam 'that River with 40000 Men, in ſpite of a 'Hundred Thouſand that oppos'd him. It is true, 'had he been beaten, the World wou'd have 'call'd him Mad-Man; and 'tis only upon 'Account of his Succeſs, that he is ſaid to have 'perform'd the moſt glorious Action in the World *.

A judicious and ſincere Hiſtorian will relate this Fact upon the Ideas of the Count *de Buſſi*; and at the ſame time look upon Monſieur *Deſpreaux*'s Deſcription as an excellent Piece of Poetry. And this likewiſe was the Opinion of Monſieur *de Buſſi* concerning it.

† However, Monſieur *Deſpreaux*'s Enemies gave out, that that Lord had written a a Letter, wherein he very roughly handled that Epiſtle, without ſparing even the Author himſelf. Monſieur *Deſpreaux*, piqu'd at a Report, the Conſequences whereof he was afraid of, deſir'd the Count *de Limoges* to write about it to Monſieur *de Buſſi*; who anſwer'd, That he never had the leaſt Thought like it.

* *Letters of the Count* de Buſſi Rabutin, Tom. II. p. 267, 268.
† 1673.

This oblig'd Monſieur *Deſpreaux* to write him the following Letter, dated from *Paris*, the 25th of *May*, 1693.

I *Confeſs*, Sir, *I have been uneaſie at a Report, That you have written a Letter wherein my ſelf, and my Epiſtle to the King on the Campaign of* Holland, *have been very ill us'd; for beſides the juſt Concern I had to be Diſapprov'd by the Man whom I moſt Eſteem and Admire throughout the whole Kingdom: I had a great deal of Difficulty to digeſt the Pleaſure it wou'd give my Enemies; but I never gave much Credit to it. For how cou'd I poſſibly believe, that the greateſt Wit at Court cou'd enter into the Sentiments and Intereſts of the Abbot* Cotin, *and to reſolve even to be in the right with him. The Letter you have written to the Count* de Limoges *has entirely undeceiv'd me, and I plainly ſee, that all this Noiſe was nothing but a very ridiculous Artifice of my very ridiculous Enemies. But whatever ill Deſign they had againſt me, I am Indebted to them for the Opportunity they have given me, of aſſuring you*, Sir, *That no Body is more convinc'd than I am of your Merit, or with more Reſpect*,

Your, *&c.*

The Anſwer which the Count *de Buſſi Rabutin* made to this Letter is as follows. It is dated from his Seat at *Buſſi* *, *May* 30. 1693.

I

* *In the Dutchy of* Burgundy.

I Cannot, Sir, anſwer your Letter as it deſerves. It is ſo full of Civilities and Praiſes that I am confounded with them. I ſhall only tell you, that I never ſaw any Thing of your compoſing which I did not think very Beautiful and very Natural; and that I have obſerv'd in your Writings, the Air of a Gentleman, which I eſteem'd above all the reſt. This is what has made me often wiſh to be acquainted with you; and ſince an Opportunity now preſents its ſelf, I beg the Continuance of your Commerce and Friendſhip, aſſuring you, at the ſame time, of mine. As for my Eſteem, you ought not to doubt of it, ſince your very Enemies give it you in their Hearts, unleſs they are the moſt ſtupid Wretches in the World.

About this time, ſeveral Doctors of the Univerſity of *Paris*, ſecretly ſupported by the Jeſuits, endeavour'd to obtain a Decree of the Parliament againſt ſuch as ſhou'd teach in the Philoſophical Schools other Principles than thoſe of *Ariſtotle*. This ridiculous Attempt put Monſieur *Deſpreaux* upon compoſing a Burleſque *Decree* in Favour of *Ariſtotle*, and againſt the New Philoſophy; which had ſo good an Effect, That it oblig'd the Univerſity to drop the Petition they had prepared for the Parliament. *They had it in their Thoughts*, ſays the *Menagiana*, *and were in good Earneſt preparing upon a Decree againſt the Philoſophy of* Deſcartes, *when Monſieur* Deſ-

preaux *publiſh'd his. It is a Trifle, which perhaps, more than any other Thing beſide, prevented the Parliament from making a real Decree.* Monſieur Boileau, *the Regiſter*, adds the *Menagiana, preſented this Decree, with many others, to be ſign'd by the late Preſident* Lamoignon, *who, being a very exact Magiſtrate, examin'd them ſeverally. When he came to that of Monſieur* Deſpreaux, This is a Trick of your Uncle's! *ſays he*, to Monſieur *Boileau.*

In this little Piece are ſpecify'd the principal Errors of which the new Philoſophy has cur'd us, and the contrary Truths for which we are beholden to it. It is Intituled, *Arret Donne, &c. A Decree made in the High Court of* Parnaſſus, *in Favour of the Maſters of Arts, Phyſicians, and Profeſſors of the Univerſity of* Stagira *in the Country of* Chimæra's, *for the Maintenance of the* Ariſtotelean *Doctrine.*

You know, *Sir*, That at *Paris*, in the Precinct call'd *Le Palais*, becauſe indeed it was heretofore the Palace of the Kings of *France*, there is a Royal Chappel founded by St. *Louis*, call'd *La Sainte Chapelle*, and is independant of the Archbiſhop, as are the other Royal Chappels. A Difference which happen'd between the Treaſurer and Chanter of this Church about a Reading-Desk, (*Lutrin*) which the Treaſurer wou'd have plac'd in the Choir, in ſpite of the Chanter and the Canons; gave

Occaſion

Occaſion to Monſieur *Deſpreaux* to write a new Piece. He was ingag'd in it after this Manner. Monſieur *de Lamoignon*, firſt Preſident of the Parliament of *Paris*, and who had a particular Eſteem for Monſieur *Deſpreaux*, having ask'd him, in a Converſation which turn'd upon the Nature of Heroic Poetry, and wherein ſome Body gave an Account of the Difference before-mention'd; whether he cou'd write an Heroic Poem upon that Occaſion: To this kind of Challenge, he reply'd, *It was not perhaps ſo Difficult as was imagin'd*; and ſome time after, he agreeably ſurpris'd that illuſtrious Magiſtrate, with a Mock *Heroic Poem*, in Four *Canto*'s, upon the *Lutrin* of the Holy Chappel. Monſieur *Deſpreaux* himſelf has inform'd us in a very particular Manner what it was that occaſion'd him to write this *Poem*, in the *Advertiſement* which he put to it the firſt time it was publiſh'd. But as this Piece is not inſerted in the latter Editions of his Works, and therefore has probably been never ſeen by you, I ſhall give it in this Place entire. You will find that Monſieur *Deſpreaux* bewilders the Readers as much as he can, and removes him as far as poſſible from the Place of Action.

'I ſhall not do, *ſays he*, as *Arioſto* 'does, who very often, when he is about to 'tell the moſt abſurd Story in the World, 'vouches it for a certain Truth, and even

'backs it with the Authority of Archbiſhop 'Turpin. As for my Part, I frankly declare, 'That the whole Poem of the *Lutrin* is a mere 'Fiction, and that every Thing therein is in-'vented; ſo much as the very Name of the 'Place where the Action is laid. I have call'd 'it *Pourges*, from the Name of a ſmall Chappel 'ſtanding formerly near *Monlhery* *. The 'Reader therefore is not to wonder, that the 'Goddeſs of *Night* in her Way from *Burgundy*, 'takes the Road of *Paris* and *Monlhery*. 'Tis 'a pretty odd Accident which gave Occa-'ſion to this Poem. In an Aſſembly, where 'I was preſent not long ſince, the Diſcourſe 'fell upon Heroic Poetry. Every one ſpoke 'of it according to his Sentiments. And I 'being ask'd my Opinion, inſiſted upon what 'I had advanc'd in my Art of Poetry: That 'an Heroic Poem, to be excellent, ſhou'd be 'founded upon no large Bottom, and that 'it belong'd to the Invention to ſupport and 'extend it. The Subject was very ſtrongly 'debated, and great Heats aroſe; but after 'many Reaſons *pro* and *con*, the Event was, as 'it generally is in ſuch ſort of Diſputes, that is, 'no Body was convinc'd, but each ſtuck firm 'to his own Opinion. The Warmth of the 'Diſpute being over, they talk'd of other Things, 'and began to laugh at their being ſo hot upon 'ſo inconſiderable a Queſtion. They proceeded 'to

* *A ſmall Town in the Iſle of France, Six Leagues from Paris, Southward.*

'to Moralize upon the Folly of Men, who con-
'ſume almoſt their whole Life in a ſerious
'Purſuit of very great Triffles, and who often
'make a conſiderable Affair of an indifferent
'Thing. Upon this, a Country Gentleman
'told the Company, a famous Quarrel that had
'formerly happen'd in a ſmall Church of his
'Province, between the Two Chief Dignita-
'ries, the Treaſurer and the Chanter, whether
'a Desk ſhou'd be plac'd here or there. The
'Story was entertaining enough. Upon this,
'one of the Virtuoſos in Company, who cou'd
'not ſo ſoon forget the Debates, ask'd me; If
'I, who was for having an Heroic Poem charg'd
'with ſo little Matter wou'd undertake to com-
'poſe One upon a Quarrel ſo thin of Incidents
'as that of this Church. I ſaid, *Why not?*
'before I reflected upon the Queſtion. This
'occaſion'd a loud Laughter in the Company,
'and I cou'd not forbear Laughing my ſelf; not
'thinking I ſhou'd ever attempt to be as good
'as my Word. However, in the Evening,
'being at Leiſure, I conſidered the Thing, and
'having in the General laid the Plan of the
'the Waggery, I now preſent the Reader with,
'I compos'd Twenty Verſes, and ſhew'd them
'to my Friends. This beginning pleas'd them.
'Finding them tickled with thoſe, I writ Twenty
'more: Thus from one Twenty to another, I
'at length ſtretch'd the Work to near Nine
'Hundred.

'This is the whole Hiſtory of the Triſle I 'now publiſh. I wou'd gladly have given it 'compleat, but I cou'd not do it, for ſome ſecret 'Reaſons which the Reader I hope will Excuſe 'me from telling; nor had I been in haſte to 'have given it thus Imperfect, were it not 'for the wretched Fragments of it that have 'been handed about. 'Tis a new Burleſque 'which I was willing to make a Tryal of in our 'Tongue. For whereas, in the other Burleſque, '*Dido* and *Æneas* talk like Oyſter-Women and 'Porters; in this, a Watch-maker and his 'Wife ſpeak like *Dido* and *Æneas*. I know not 'therefore, whether my Poem will have the 'Qualities requiſite to pleaſe a Reader: But I 'dare flatter my ſelf, it will have at leaſt the 'the Agreeableneſs of Novelty, ſince I do not 'think there is any Work of this Nature in our 'Tongue: Sarazin's *Defeat of the Bouts rimez* *, 'being rather a meer Allegory than a Poem, 'as this is.

Of all Monſieur *Deſpreaux* Works there is none wherein he has better ſhewn the Beauty and Fruitfulneſs of his Genius. Here indeed he has fulfill'd the true Idea of a Poet; ſince out of ſo barren a Subject he had the Art to produce ſo great a Variety of Incidents, and to adorn them with ſuch beautiful Epiſodes. But what makes one of the greateſt Beauties of this Work is

* *A liſt of Words that Rhime to one another, drawn up and given to a Poet, who was to make a Sonnet or ſome other little Piece of Poetry to be Rhymed, in the ſame Order they are plac'd upon the Liſt.*

is undoubtedly the Satirical Touches which are therein agreeably interſpers'd, and ſhew, That Monſieur *Deſpreaux* had no leſs in View to inſtruct the Reader, than to divert him, according to the Maxim of *Horace*: *Et prodeſſe volunt & delectare Poetæ.* Can, for Example, the luxurious Idleneſs of the Canons be better Painted than he does it in theſe Verſes?

Midſt the ſoft Pleaſures of fraternal Peace,
In laughing Plenty, and luxurious Eaſe,
Pourges had long her Ancient Chappel ſeen,
Florid in Years, and in her Autumn Green;
Her luſty Canons roſy Beauties Grace,
And brilliant Health Crimſons each ruddy Face;
Deep ſunk in Down, ſoft as their Furs they lye;
Fatten'd with tedious Holy Luxury;
While there the ſacred Sluggards waſte the Day
In dull Repoſe—— By *Deputy* they Pray.
They only Watch'd, that they might reliſh Reſt,
And never Faſted, but to make a Feaſt.
Unhealthy *Mattins* wiſely they decline,
And ſubſtitute a *Journeyman*-Divine.

Lutrin, Canto I.

The

The Ambition, Vanity and Ignorance, of thoſe Gentlemen is drawn to the Life in this Work. Is any Thing more Natural than what he puts into the Mouth of *Evrard* that fat fuſty Canon, whom they wou'd have had to conſult ſome certain Books?

If at my Years, *ſaid he*, I turn one Page,
Or hurt with *Books* theſe Eyes too weak with Age,
May I, like thee, on muſty Paper feed,
Turn *Bookworm*, and be buried e'er I'm Dead;
Let us, who know the Uſe of living, live;
Thy Meagre *Body* does thy *Soul* ſurvive:
Go, Macerate, what Fleſh remains, with Books,
We are not fond of ſuch mean haggard Looks:
What *others* do ſhall ne'er diſturb *my* Head;
I neither *Alcoran*, nor *Bible*, read.
I know right-well the Price of College Hay,
Or what our Farmers every Quarter Pay:
On which good Vineyard there's a Mortgage made *,
And what, and how, the Intereſt muſt be paid;

I [illegible]y

* *The Abbey of* Saint Nicaiſe *at* Rheims, *worth between* 9 *and* 10000 *Livres a Year, is Mortgag'd to the Chapter of the* Sainte Chapelle.

Twenty large Hogſheads fill'd by my Command,
Rang'd Orthodoxly in my *Cellar* ſtand:
Theſe are my Authors, there my Study's plac'd;
By them inform'd, ſubſtantial Bliſs I taſte;
And ſince all Knowledge in Opinion lies,
Can, when I pleaſe, from thence *be* warm *and* wiſe.
As for this Desk; D'ye think your Books will charm
The Monſter down? Believe me, this Right Arm
More expeditiouſly your Work ſhall do;
The *Gorgon*, without *Latin*, overthrow.
Whatever does offend me I'll remove,
Tho' *all* the Father's ſhou'd the Desk approve:
Let us to Breakfaſt, and our Sorrows drown;
So fortified, we'll knock the Monſter down.

Canto IV.

In another Place, he cauſes one to addreſs himſelf in this Manner to the Treaſurer, to whom likewiſe he gives the Name of *Prelate*, becauſe he was the Head of that independant Church:

If in the Morn the *Chanter* dares deſtroy
Our glorious Work, and the Machine annoy,

Actions on Actions, Suits on Suits ſhall tell
The Church's Spirit and her Servants Zeal.
Then authoriz'd by Heaven you may engage;
This is a War worthy a Prelate's Rage:
Wou'd you to *Prayer* alone that Heart confine?
Let your great Soul in ardent *Action* ſhine!
* Let a dull Country Prelate be content
With a long-life in lazy Preaching ſpent.
At *Pourges*, Sir, you flouriſh---- Then prepare,
Be Obſtinate, Vexatious, Rouſe to War;
Be Active, Reſtleſs, Vigilant and Proud;
This raiſes you above the vulgar Croud;
From common Crape diſcriminates a Lord,
And is a Prelate's Charter on Record:
Then throw your *Benedictions* boldly round:
Let every Place your *Benedictions* ſound.
Bleſs in the *Chanter*'s Sight, and never ceaſe,
With up-lift Palms the very *Chanter* bleſs. *Canto* I.

'Tis

* *Monſieur* Nicolas Pavillon, *Biſhop of* Aleth, *a Town in* Languedoc, *made himſelf famous for his Piety and the Application with which he endeavour'd to reſtore the ancient Diſcipline in his Dioceſs. He died in* 1677.

'Tis certain, that as this is a very tickliſh Subject, ſo Monſieur *Deſpreaux* did not dwell long upon it; nor cou'd he indeed have ſaid ſo much as he did without the help of Fiction, and the Eſteem he was in at Court. How much ſoever an Author may be in the right, he muſt not expect impunity in *France*, if he attacks the Exceſſes and Irregularity of the Clergy. That would be the worſt of all Hereſies; and you have doubtleſs, *Sir*, taken Notice, That our illuſtrious Author has kept a profound Silence upon that particular in his other Works. We are not therefore to be ſurpriz'd, if even in the *Lutrin*, he has ſo lightly touch'd upon that Sore. I know not whether Monſieur *la Bruyere* had not an Eye to this, when he ſays *: *A Man that is born a Chriſtian and a French-Man, finds himſelf conſtrain'd in the Writing of Satire; the great Subjects are forbid him; he ſometimes enters upon them, but afterwards diverts to little Matters, which he heighthens by the Beauty of his Genius and Style.*

You Obſerve, *Sir*, That Monſieur *Deſpreaux*, in the Advertiſement put before the *Lutrin*, ſays, 'he wou'd gladly have given it compleat, but cou'd not do it, for ſome ſecret 'Reaſons, which the Reader, he hopes, will 'Excuſe him from telling; nor had he been in 'haſte to have given it thus imperfect, were it 'not

* *La Bruyere's* Characters, *page* 130.

'not for the wretched Fragments that had been 'handed about.

It is probable, he ſpeaks here of the Fifth and Sixth *Canto*'s of that Work, which he did not think fit to Publiſh at that time; not only becauſe he therein makes a Deſcription of the *Palais* *, which was too plain to be miſunderſtood by any Body, but likewiſe becauſe he Addreſſes himſelf to Monſieur *de Lamoignon*, under the Name of *Ariſtus*, and gives ſuch a Picture of that illuſtrious Magiſtrate as wou'd ſoon have diſcover'd the Original. We may, perhaps, likewiſe add, That theſe Two *Canto*'s contain certain Things of a bolder Nature than the former; ſuch for Example is the Deſcription of the Prelate, getting the Victory over the Chanter and the Canons, by Bleſſing them unexpectedly and againſt their Will, and the Manner, how he gains to himſelf, by this Artifice, the Acclamations and Protection of the Mob. After, having ſaid, That the Partiſans of the Prelate had been knock'd down with *Avicenna*'s Works, he adds:

The Prelate ſaw their Fall with ghaſtful Eyes,
And ſent to Heav'n a Scream that pierc'd the Skies.
Struck back with Horror, and appal'd with Fear,
He curſes in his Heart the God of War.

With

* *The Scene of Action is the* Lutrin; *and where the Courts of Judicature are likewiſe held.*

With ſilent Indignation he retreats,
Yet ſtill the *Chanter* in his Mind defeats.
Then rallying his loſt Spirits, makes a Stand,
And from his *Caſſock* draws his vengeful Hand.
Yes, ſaid the Mighty Chief, tho' *Armies* fail,
Theſe *Bleſſing-giving Fingers* ſhall prevail.

Forward he moves, and upwards turns his Eyes,
Then ſtretch'd his Fingers forth in Holy-Wiſe.

Kneeling in heaps the *Paſſengers* Receive
The *Benedictions* he prepares to give
With Politic Deſign, to turn the Rout
Upon his Foes, who durſt not *ſtand* him out.
The zealous Vulgar force down all they meet,
Nor will they ſuffer One to keep his Feet.

Th' out-witted adverſe Hoſt, confounded Stare
At this unthought of Stratagem in War,
And dread the Storm approaching from afar.
Vainly the trembling *Chanter* ſeeks for Aid
From his own Courage, on his firm Brigade;
By *Both* forſaken, *He* too now muſt *Fly*,
Or *Fall* before his haughty Enemy.

The

The conſternated Troops themſelves Disband;
Yet none Eſcapes the ſwift-purſuing *Hand*.
Driv'n on each others Backs, and ſpur'd with Fear;
Still Hangs the Conqu'ring *Finger* on their Rear.
Evrard, in Hopes to hide his threatn'd Head
From Holy Inſult, to a corner Fled.
The Watchful *Prelate* ſaw his cloſe Retreat,
And ſtrait March'd up, his Conqueſt to Compleat;
Then Turning to the Right, he Wheel'd around,
And *Bleſs'd* the frightn'd Champion to the Ground.
Thrice he erects his Rebel Head in vain,
The lengthen'd *Finger* forc'd him down again.
Oblig'd to Kneel, becauſe the *Mob*'s ſo near;
And what he owes to *Rev'rence* pays to *Fear*.
The *Prelate* to the Temple makes his Way,
To taſte the Fruits of this Victorious Day.
The *Chanter* and the *Canons* too return,
And *Inly* their defeated Project mourn.
Vanquiſh'd by pious Fraud, in Crouds they preſt,
Thro' the throng'd Doors, at once both *Maul'd* and *Bleſt*.

It is, I ſay, not unlikely, that this Paſſage, and ſome others, oblig'd Monſieur *Deſpreaux* to defer the Publication of the Two laſt *Cantos* of the *Lutrin*, till the Year 1681; as we ſhall ſee hereafter. 'Tis certain, the Clergy were not over-well pleas'd with this Work, and 'twas charg'd with Irreligion. This is the Opinion of Monſieur *Baillet*, at leaſt. *The Poem of the* Lutrin, ſays he, *is perhaps the leaſt defenſible of all Monſieur* Deſpreaux's *Works. It muſt be own'd, there are ſome Touches which look a little too Comic; as that of the* Epiſcopal Benediction, *which is perfectly Burleſque, and affords a little too much Diverſion to Scoffers and Libertines* *.

Poets, you know, *Sir*, are not equally capable of ſucceeding in all Kinds of Poetry. *Chapelain*, for Example, got Reputation by an Ode, and made himſelf Ridiculous by his Heroic Poem of *la Pucelle*; *Quinault* miſcarry'd in his Tragedies, and yet was ſo happy in his Operas that no Body cou'd Match him in that Way of Writing; *&c.* Monſieur *Deſpreaux* having obſerv'd, That the generality of the Poets, whom he had Criticis'd in his *Satires*, might have done better, if they had well conſulted their own Genius, and been ſufficiently inſtructed in the

* *Baillet*, Jugement des Scavans, *Tom. IV.* Contenant les Poetes, *Part* 5. *Pag.* 369.

Rules of *French* Poetry; he apply'd himſelf to write an ART OF POETRY, to prevent, if poſſible; the *French* Poets from falling into the like Miſtake another time. Not but that *Ronſard*, *Pelletier*, and others, had treated upon that Subject: but beſides their not having a juſt Idea of the Genius of their Tongue, they neither underſtood the Sweetneſs, nor the Harmony, nor the Severity of the *French* Poeſie; and therefore their Precepts are too defective to ſerve at this time for a Rule.

Monſieur *Deſpreaux* therefore could not perform any Thing of greater Benefit to his Nation, than his *Art of Poetry*. But whereas the Authors juſt now mention'd, wrote in Proſe, he compos'd his Work in Verſe, like *Horace*, and divided it into Four *Canto's*. He likewiſe imitated that illuſtrious Ancient, in not only giving Rules for Writing well in each Kind of Poetry, but quoting ſeveral living Authors, and mentioning them as Examples which were carefully to be avoided.

The Art of Poetry appear'd the firſt Time in the New Edition which Monſieur *Deſpreaux* gave of his Works in 1674. He added to it, the *Treatiſe upon the Sublime, or the Marvellous in Diſcourſe*, which he had *tranſlated from the Greek of* Longinus. This Tranſlation is accompanied with a Preface, wherein Monſieur *Deſpreaux* gives firſt an Abridgment of *Longinus*'s Life;

Life; and afterwards, a Commendation of *his Treatiſe on the Sublime*, which of all the Works that able Rhetorician was Author of, is the only one tranſmitted down to us: and after having taken Notice of the ſeveral *Latin* Tranſlations that had been made of it, he declares the Method which he follow'd in his, and the Difficulties he had met with. Laſtly, he adverts, That by *Longinus*'s *Sublime* we are to underſtand *the Extraordinary*, *the Surprizing*, and, as he himſelf tranſlates it, the *Marvellous in Diſcourſe*; and gives for an Example of it that Paſſage of *Moſes* reported by *Longinus* himſelf: *God ſaid, Let there be Light, and there was Light.* Monſieur *Deſpreaux* ſubjoyns to this Work ſome *Remarks*, wherein he explains the Text of *Longinus*, and Accounts for his own Tranſlation.

* The Advertiſement which Monſieur *Deſpreaux* prefix'd to this Edition being, not only a Piece of Curioſity, but likewiſe omitted in the following Editions, I ſhall report it, *Sir*, in it's full length, without fearing that you'll take it Ill; and I ſhall continue to do the like hereafter, for preſerving theſe ſort of ſmall Pieces.

* 1674.

'I had Thoughts, *ſays Monſieur* Deſpreaux, 'of making a pretty long Preface; wherein, 'according to the receiv'd Cuſtom of our Mo- 'dern Writers, I hop'd to have given a very 'Satisfactory Account of my Works, and ju- 'ſtify'd the Liberties I had therein taken. But, 'afterwards, I conſider'd, That theſe ſort of 'Preambles generally ſerv'd for no other pur- 'poſe, but to expoſe the Author's Vanity, and 'inſtead of excuſing his Faults, did frequently 'furniſh new Weapons againſt him. Beſides, 'I do not think my Writings good enough to 'Merit Elogiums, nor bad enough to need an 'Apology. I ſhall not therefore either Praiſe 'or Juſtifie my ſelf in the leaſt. The Reader 'is only to be inform'd, That I now give him 'a more correct Edition of my Satires than any 'that has yet appear'd, Two New Epiſtles, an 'Art of Poetry in Verſe, and Four Cantos of 'the *Lutrin*. I have likewiſe added a Tran- 'ſlation of the Treatiſe which *Longinus* the 'Rhetorician wrote upon the *Sublime*, or *the 'Marvellous in Diſcourſe*. I at firſt made this 'Tranſlation for my own Inſtruction, rather 'than out of any Deſign to publiſh it. But I 'was of Opinion it wou'd not be unacceptable 'after the *Art of Poetry*, to which that Treatiſe 'has ſome Relation, and wherein I have in- 'ſerted ſeveral Precepts taken from it. I fur- 'ther deſign'd to annex ſome Dialogues in 'Proſe, which I have by me, but was preven-

'ted

'ted by ſome particular Conſiderations. I hope, 'one Day, to give a Volume of them, apart. 'This is all I have to ſay to the Reader; and 'yet I know not but I have already ſaid too 'much, and, by theſe few Words, run into the 'Error I wou'd have avoided.

Theſe *Dialogues in Proſe*, which Monſieur *Deſpreaux* ſpeaks of, have not yet appear'd, except the *Dialogue of the Dead*, and of that too we have but a very imperfect Copy, as I have obſerv'd before.

Beſides, There is in this Edition I am now ſpeaking of, one Thing too ſingular and too glorious for M. *Deſpreaux* not to be related here. The moſt Chriſtian King, who always lov'd to encourage the Sciences and Polite Literature, and who does not yield to any of his Subjects in Juſtneſs of Thinking, and Delicacy of Taſte, was pleas'd to have Monſieur *Deſpreaux*'s Works read to him conſtantly as he compos'd them: but, not Content with giving them his private Approbation, he was reſolv'd to render the ſame Public: for Monſieur *Deſpreaux* having Petition'd his Majeſty to grant him a Licenſe to Reprint his firſt Pieces, and Publiſh ſome new Ones, he order'd that they ſhou'd make known in the Patent, the Pleaſure he had taken in reading thoſe Works. It runs in theſe Terms *.

* *It is dated*, March 28. 1674.

'LOUIS, *&c.* Whereas our Dear and Well-'beloved the Sieur *Deſpreaux*, has moſt 'humbly remonſtrated to Us, that he has 'written divers Pieces; namely, The *Art of* 'Poetry, in Verſe; a Poem, Intitul'd, *The Lu-*'*trin*, ſeveral Dialogues, Diſcourſes, and Epi-'ſtles, in Verſe, and a Tranſlation of *Longinus*, 'which he deſires to have Printed, and likewiſe 'to Reprint a ſecond Time his *Satires*, the Li-'cenſe whereof is expir'd, if we ſhou'd pleaſe 'to grant him our Letters of Permiſſion for ſo 'doing: WHEREFORE, being deſirous to encou-'rage the ſaid Sieur *Deſpreaux*, and to give to 'the Public, by the Reading of his Works, the 'ſame Satisfaction we our Selves receiv'd there-'by; We have permitted, and by theſe Pre-'ſents under our Sign Manual, do permit him; 'to cauſe the ſaid Works to be Printed, *&c.*

But the moſt Chriſtian King did not only give him this particular Mark of his Eſteem; but likewiſe 'gratifi'd him with a Penſion, as Monſieur *Deſpreaux* himſelf informs us in an Epiſtle he ſome time after compos'd, and addreſs'd to Monſieur *de Guilleragues*, Secretary of the King's Cabinet. After having ſaid, That he had renounc'd the Law to devote himſelf to Poetry, he adds:

Riches

Riches I ſaw muſt be acquir'd by Sweat,
And hated Wealth which was ſo hard to get.
The Muſe and Bus'neſs never well agree,
The one's as much a Slave as t'others free.
Freedom I choſe; my Studies Bent to Truth,
And in her Service ſignaliz'd my Youth.
Was Truth the Way to Riſe? And cou'd the Muſe
A worſe Employ to make her Fortune chuſe?
Poets have ſtill their Father *Homer*'s Curſe,
And who, by ſpeaking Truth, e'er fill'd his Purſe?
What had I done, that I ſhou'd hope to ſee,
Where all were Blanks, a Prize turn up for me?
But the King's Bounty which is unconfin'd,
To Truth a Friend, to Merit ever kind,
Pleas'd with a Plainneſs ſeldom ſeen before,
Enlarg'd with Royal Gifts my little Store.
Nor Envy nor Cabal his Hand withheld,
The more they Griev'd, the more my Treaſure ſwell'd.
My Foes enrag'd, with doleful Cries complain;
His Favour was the ſame; they Rage in vain.
No Cries cou'd ſtop his Courſe; with Hands profuſe,
He crown'd my Labours and enrich'd my Muſe.

But 'tis too much ——My Fortune far ſurpaſt
My Hopes, and all above Enough is waſte.
Now Conſtant or Inconſtant let her be;
It is not in her Power to anger me.
And for the Future, if ſhe's up or down,
It ſhall not break my Reſt, I'll ſtill ſleep on.
The only Care that now my Breaſt can ſting,
Is how I ſhall the Hero's Praiſes ſing, *&c.*

* You do not want to be inform'd, *Sir*, that the Inhabitants of *Meſſina* who had revolted from the *Spaniards* in 1674, to give themſelves up to *France*, ſuffer'd a very great Dearth of Proviſions in the Beginning of the next Year. The *Spaniards* had prevented their receiving any by Land, while their Fleet, conſiſting of twenty Men of War and ſeventeen Gallies, block'd up the Entrance of the *Phare*. Mean time the Duke of *Vivonne*, who was appointed Viceroy of *Sicily*, ſetting out from *Toulon* with nine Men of War, one light Frigat, three Fire-ſhips and eight Barks laden with Proviſions, came in Sight of the *Spaniſh* Fleet the 11th of *February*, and attack'd them. After a very ſharp Engagement of ſome Hours the two Fleets parted; but M. *de Vivonne* being join'd by ſix Men of War, who were before *Meſſina*, he

* 1675.

he again attack'd the *Spaniſh* Fleet; and notwithſtanding the Inequality of Forces, beat them and oblig'd them to retire with Loſs. Next Day he enter'd the *Phare* with the Proviſions deſign'd for the *Meſſinois*, and of which they were in extreme Want. M. *Deſpreaux* was too well known to M. *de Vivonne*, not to congratulate him upon ſo reſolute and glorious an Action; but not being willing to follow the common Road of Compliments, and knowing beſides how nice that Lord was upon the Article of Praiſe; he ſent him two Letters dated from the *Elyzian Fields*, one in *Balzac*'s Style, and the other in *Voiture*'s, as if thoſe two *Beaux Eſprits*, charm'd at the News of the Battle, had written to him from the other World to congratulate him. This Fiction, conſider'd only as ſuch, is a very ingenious one, and perfectly worthy of M. *Deſpreaux*; but 'tis believ'd, and with a great Deal of Reaſon, that he carry'd his Views further, and that theſe two Letters *are two very cunning Satires againſt* Balzac, Voiture, *and the Partiſans of both* *. And indeed it wou'd be a vain Attempt at this Time to think to gain Applauſe by ſo bombaſt a Style as that of *Balzac*; and I very much doubt whether a Gayety full of Points and Puns, like *Voiture*'s, wou'd meet with any more Approbation.

'There

* Baillet, *ubi ſupra.*

'There are very few true Models, *ſays* 'M. de la Valterie; *Voiture* is not one; and 'much leſs *Balzac*. *Voiture*'s Prettyneſſes and 'Balzac's Flights have an Affectation naturally 'diſpleaſing. The one wou'd be agreeable 'and make his Reader laugh, let him be in 'what Humour he will. The other wou'd be 'admirable and make himſelf eſteem'd by the 'Numerouſneſs of his Words, and the Exceſs 'of his Amplifications. The two Letters writ-'ten to M. *de Vivonne*, by imitating the Man-'ner of both, are a delicate Satire upon their 'Style, and genteely diſcovers the Weakneſs 'of thoſe two Authors, who were ſo much ce-'lebrated ſome Years ago *.

But M. *Deſpreaux* has explain'd himſelf more fully with Relation to *Voiture* in one of his laſt Pieces, wherein he ſpeaks thus:

Le Lecteur ne ſait plus admirer dans Voiture
De ton † froid jeu de Mots l'inſipide figure.
C'eſt a regret qu'on voit cet Auteur ſi charmant,
Et pour mille beaux traits vante ſi juſtement,

Chez

---

* *La Valterie*'s true and falſe Beauty of Pieces of Wit. *Chap.* 1. In the *Melange Curieux des Meilleures pieces attribuees a M. de St.* Evremond, &c. Vol. I. p. 146, 147. *Amſt.* Edit. 1706.

† Monſieur *Deſpreaux*, s'adreſſe a l'Equivoque.

Chez toi toujours cherchant quelque fineſſe aigue
Preſenter au Lecteur ſa penſee ambigue :
Et ſouvent du faux ſens d'un Proverbe affecte
Faire de ſon Diſcours la piquante beaute *.

The Reader now no longer can endure
Th' inſipid Puns ſo frequent in *Voiture* :
That Author, whom the World ſo high had rais'd,
And for a thouſand Beauties juſtly prais'd,
Is pity'd, now, when we behold him ſweat
To *point* his Thought with ſome ambiguous Wit,
And with what Pains the *piquant* Grace he dreſt
In the falſe Senſe of ſome Proverbial Jeſt.

About this Time there appear'd ſome very bitter Pieces againſt M. *Deſpreaux*. The Poets whom he had fall'n upon, and among others M. *Deſmarets*, Author of a Poem intituled *Clovis*, and M. *Pradon*, who wrote ſeveral Plays, left no Stone unturn'd to run down the laſt new Pieces he had publiſh'd. They took to task both the Verſification and the ſubject Matter of them. The *Art of Poetry* was the moſt roughly handled. Some maintain'd that it was nothing but a Tranſlation from *Horace*; others,

* Satire the XII. Upon Equivocation.

others, that many of the Reflexions were borrow'd from *Vida*. M. *Deſpreaux* return'd no Anſwer to theſe Writings; he only took the Opportunity of the new Impreſſion that was Printing of his Works to ſhew in general what he thought of all theſe Criticiſms.

'I fancy, *ſays he in his Preface*, the Public 'will do me the Juſtice to believe that I ſhou'd 'not be much puzzled to anſwer the Books 'that have been written againſt me; but I 'have naturally a kind of an Averſion for thoſe 'long Apologies which are made in favour of 'Trifles, eſpecially ſuch Trifles as my Works. 'Beſides, having Formally attack'd, as I have 'done, many celebrated Writers, I ſhou'd be 'very unjuſt, if I took it ill, to be ſerv'd in the 'ſame Manner. Beſides, if the Objections that 'are made againſt me be weighty, it is fit they 'ſhou'd ſtand as ſuch; and if they are trifling, 'there will be found ſenſible Readers enow 'to ſet right thoſe weak Heads, that may 'ſuffer themſelves to be ſurpris'd by them. I 'ſhall therefore make no Reply to any Thing 'that has been either ſaid or written againſt 'me; and if I have not given my Readers good 'Rules for Poetry, I hope by this Means to 'give them a pretty fair Example of Modera-'tion. Far from rendering Reproach for Re-'proach, they may pleaſe to accept of my 'Thanks for the Care they take in publiſhing, 'that my *Art of Poetry* is a Tranſlation of *Ho-*

race.

'*race.* For ſince in my Work, which contains 'eleven hundred Verſes, there are not above 'fifty or ſixty at moſt imitated from *Horace*, 'they cou'd not have paſs'd a greater Compli-'ment upon the Reſt than by ſuppoſing it 'tranſlated from that great Poet, and I am 'amaz'd after this that they dare oppoſe the 'Rules therein laid down. As for the *Plagia-'riſms* from *Vida*, which I am likewiſe charg'd 'with, my Friends know very well that I ne-'ver read him, and if Occaſion were, can make 'any Oath of it which they ſhall think requi-'ſite, without Fear of being perjur'd.

Are you not pleas'd, *Sir*, with this Apology? It is certainly worthy of a great Soul: A Man of Senſe is not uneaſie, does not diſturb himſelf when he is written againſt. If his Adverſaries Argument be groundleſs, he leaves it to fall of it ſelf; if it be valid, he makes uſe of it for his Amendment. M. *Deſpreaux* had not a good Opinion enough of his Antagoniſts Writings, to ſit down and refute them: yet he improv'd by their Cenſure whenever he thought it reaſonable; And even made uſe of the Idea of their Hatred and Envy as Incentives to take the more Pains in his Studies, and to ſet himſelf above the Reach of their Cenſure. This is what he has thought fit to inform us himſelf in an Epiſtle he writ ſome Time after to his Friend M. *Racine*.

Ev'n

E'vn I, whoſe Merit's ſo much leſs than thine,
Can on pale Envy look, and not repine;
Free, as I found my Humour and my Mind,
Not form'd by Nature of the pliant Kind,
I ſtock'd my Self with uſeful Foes betimes,
And whetted on their hardn'd Spite my Rhimes.
More to their Hate, I grant, I owe, than All
That *France* a *Talent* has been pleas'd to call.
Againſt me when they roſe, their venom'd Spite,
Serv'd, when I trod, to keep my Steps upright:
With Caution, every Line I ventur'd, came,
As ready to Correct, as they to Blame;
Beware, I to my ſelf wou'd often cry,
The Band obſerves thee with a watchfull Eye.
By their Advice my Verſes I review'd,
And mended them, if their Remarks were good.
Charg'd with an Error, no Reply I make,
But Anſwer, by Correcting the Miſtake:
When Criminal to render me they ſtrove,
My Vengeance was in Virtue to improve.

But

But to return to the Edition of Monſieur *Deſpreaux* Works in 1675. I muſt obſerve to you, That at the End of the Preface to *Longinus*, Monſieur *Deſpreaux* added a very handſom Commendation of Monſieur *Caſſandre*'s Tranſlation of *Ariſtotle*'s Rhetoric into *French*.

* Tho' the moſt Chriſtian King had, as you have already ſeen, *Sir*, honour'd Monſieur *Deſpreaux* with particular Marks of his Eſteem and Favour, he was pleas'd to give him further and ſtronger Proofs of both, by pitching upon him joyntly with Monſieur *Racine*, to write *His Hiſtory*. And his Majeſty not only aſſign'd each of them a Penſion for the Employment he had honour'd them with, but likewiſe order'd them a conſiderable Gratuity in hand. It was in *October* 1677. they were appointed to this Function. Some ſhort time after, theſe Gentlemen going to Court, the King ſaid to them: *I am ſorry you were not preſent at the laſt Campagne; you might have ſeen ſomething of War, and your Journey wou'd have been no very long one.* Monſieur *Racine* reply'd; Sir, *We had nothing but Town-Habits; We order'd a Campaign-Suit; but the Places which your Majeſty attack'd were taken before we cou'd get them made.* This was agreeably receiv'd †. You know, *Sir*, The

French

* 1677.

† Lettres du Comte de Buſſi Rabutin, *ubi ſupra*, Vol. 3. Let. 309.